

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the office action dated February 24, 2006.

The Examiner rejected claims 2-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Oosterhout et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,405,371 (hereinafter Oosterhout) and Yoshida et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,137,486 (hereinafter Yoshida). Each of claims 2-23, as amended, patentably distinguishes over this combination.

Oosterhout, the cited primary reference, discloses a television transmitter/receiver combination capable of displaying a programming guide. In particular, the disclosed transmitter, in addition to the signals for each respective television channel, also transmits a “mosaic” signal to the receiver through a multiplexer. This mosaic signal, constructed from the respective television channel signals, comprises plural “sub-images” where each sub-image shows an image related to the content of a respective television channel broadcast to the receiver. The receiver receives the mosaic signal and constructs an EPG screen that displays the respective sub-images in a grid pattern across the television screen, ordered by channel number. Upon viewing the mosaic, a user may select a descriptor value, representing a potential characteristic of television programs, e.g. movies, sports, etc. The receiver then “marks” the particular sub-images that include the user-selected characteristic, thus permitting the user to more efficiently browse and select a desired television channel to watch.

Independent claim 21, as amended, includes the limitations of “providing an electronically stored user description scheme containing user preference data for a predetermined user and at least one descriptor for identification of said predetermined user” and “an electronic device selecting without user input at least one of a video, an image, and audio based upon an interaction of said user description scheme with at least one of said program description scheme or said system description scheme.” Oosterhout fails to disclose these limitations. First, the Examiner may interpret Oosterhout to disclose a “user description scheme” in the mind of the user, to which, once the user inputs the descriptor he or she has in mind, the EPG selects television channels showing content corresponding to the user description scheme by marking their associated sub-images. Under this interpretation, claim 21 would distinguish over Oosterhout in two respects: the description scheme would not be “electronically stored” and the electronic EPG could not select the desired content without additional user input.

Alternatively, the Examiner may consider the marking of television channels corresponding to a descriptor that was input by a user as the “electronically stored” user description scheme. However, even under this interpretation, claim 21 would distinguish over Oosterhout because the selection of a channel based upon the stored description scheme can only happen by user input. Thus, in neither circumstance does Oosterhout disclose the limitations of claim 21.

Nor does Yoshida, the secondary reference cited by the Examiner, disclose or suggest modifying Oosterhout to provide the missing limitations. At the outset, the applicant notes that the Examiner’s proposed combination fails to suggest modifying Oosterhout’s mosaic display interface at all. Yoshida merely discloses that users may desire to lock out certain channels from the receiver unless a password is entered, so that children cannot see content their parents deem inappropriate. This functionality is completely independent of Oosterhout’s mosaic display, i.e. inclusion of Yoshida’s channel lockout mechanism into the receiver of Oosterhout would not alter the latter’s mosaic EPG interface at all. For example, and assuming Oosterhout and Yoshida were combined, if a minor selected the theme of “movies” and one of the subsequently highlighted sub-images was for a channel locked out by a password, then the subsequent selection of that channel by the minor would simply tune the receiver to the channel, which would display either a blank screen, a substitute “not authorized” screen, or the like.

Furthermore, the applicant notes that Oosterhout’s mosaic display is fully constructed at the transmitter, and the receiver is not disclosed to be capable of blocking out any of the particular sub-images sent through the multiplexer. Thus, even to the extent that the Examiner suggests that Yoshida’s lockout mechanism could be used to block out reception of the particular sub-images in the mosaic, for which either the channel or a particular program on the channel is deemed inappropriate, neither Oosterhout nor Yoshida disclose a receiver having the technical capabilities of doing so. Yoshida’s receiver lacks such a mosaic, hence cannot have that functionality. Oosterhout’s receiver simply reconstructs a mosaic signal pre-assembled at a transmitter that was broadcast independently of the respective signals of the channels from which the mosaic was assembled. Oosterhout’s receiver is not disclosed to be capable of blocking any portion of the received mosaic signal. Therefore, independent claim 21, from which all other

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presented claims depend, patentably distinguishes over the cited combination and should be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 2-24.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Rohlf', written over a horizontal line.

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